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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/864,309	05/25/2001	Shigeyuki Uzawa	862.C2239	2803

5514 7590 11/10/2003

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EXAMINER

JARRETT, RYAN A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2125

DATE MAILED: 11/10/2003

7

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/864,309

Applicant(s)

UZAWA ET AL.

Examiner

Ryan A. Jarrett

Art Unit

2125

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 September 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 48-61 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 48-61 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed 9/4/03 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant states that Ueda et al. does not teach the features of the port section recited in claim 48, which include a vacuum mechanism for creating a vacuum inside of the port section and a supply mechanism for supplying an inert gas into the inside of the port section. However, Ueda et al. discloses that "clean gas is supplied from the aligner 200 into the interface section 12", or port section (col. 9 lines 50-52). Ueda et al. also discloses that the interface section can be naturally exhausted to be under normal pressure in order to prevent contaminated air from entering the exposure chamber (e.g. col. 9 lines 55-63, col. 11 lines 6-14). Alternatively, an exhauster can be provided in the port section to create a vacuum atmosphere (e.g. col. 12 lines 6-11, Fig. 12). Therefore, the system of Ueda et al. can prevent degradation of the internal atmosphere of the aligner when loading wafers into and out of the aligner.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 48-61 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ueda et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,319,322. Ueda et al. discloses an exposure apparatus for exposing a wafer to a pattern, said apparatus comprising: a chamber in which an atmosphere is conditioned to be different from an atmosphere in another apparatus outside of said exposure apparatus and the wafer is exposed to the pattern; and a port section through which the wafer is transferred between said chamber and the other apparatus, said port section having a load-lock mechanism including a vacuum mechanism for creating a vacuum inside of said port section and a supply mechanism for supplying an inert gas into the inside of said port section;

wherein said exposure apparatus includes a plurality of said port sections; wherein said port sections include a first port section for loading the wafer and a second port section for unloading the wafer; further comprising an interface section for stocking a wafer between said port section and the other apparatus; wherein said interface section includes a load-lock mechanism; wherein said interface section is shared by a plurality of said port sections; wherein the other apparatus includes a coating/developing system; wherein said port section includes a temperature control mechanism -for controlling a temperature of the wafer; wherein said temperature control mechanism includes at least one of a heater and a cooler; wherein said load-lock mechanism and said temperature control mechanism operate in parallel with each other; wherein said chamber includes a temperature control mechanism for controlling a temperature of the wafer; wherein an ambient atmosphere of said temperature control mechanism is conditioned to be different from another atmosphere in said chamber;

a device manufacturing system comprising: an exposure apparatus defined in claim 48; and another apparatus which performs for a wafer at least one of a pre-process and a post-process with respect to an exposure process to be performed by said exposure apparatus; a device manufacturing method comprising a step of exposing a wafer to a pattern using an exposure apparatus defined in claim 48 (e.g. col. 1 line 32 – col. 2 line 43, col. 5 lines 1-53, col. 6 lines 33-67, col. 7 lines 20-40, col. 8 lines 15-67, col. 9 line 44 – col. 10 line 35, col. 11 lines 6-14, col. 12 lines 6-11, Fig. 12).

Conclusion

4. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

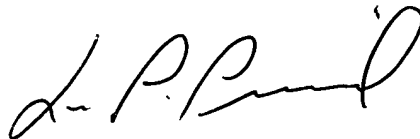
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ryan A. Jarrett whose telephone number is (703) 308-4739. The examiner can normally be reached on 10:00-6:30 M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Leo Picard can be reached on (703) 308-0538. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.

raj
11/3/03

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Picard', with a stylized flourish at the end.

LEO PICARD
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100